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**From:** Shoren Brown [SBrown@tu.org]  
**Sent:** 6/10/2013 5:19:35 PM  
**To:** Hough, Palmer [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=51cd0b0d81ac416fa265944d6e6575ce-PHough]  
**Subject:** FYI

<http://www.adn.com/2013/06/07/2931467/begich-didnt-support-pebble-study.html>

## Begich: Didn't support Pebble study extension

Published: June 7, 2013

Read more here: <http://www.adn.com/2013/06/07/2931467/begich-didnt-support-pebble-study.html#storylink=cpy>

By BECKY BOHRER — Associated Press

JUNEAU, ALASKA — U.S. Sen. Mark Begich says he didn't support a federal decision extending the comment period on a study of large mining impacts in the Bristol Bay region.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency extended until June 30 the comment period on its revised watershed assessment. The comment period originally was to end May 31.

Begich told a town hall Friday that EPA has plenty of material to work with, without the extended comment period. He said more time can mean more politics added to the process.

Begich said he wants science to determine what happens in the region. He said it may be apparent what direction the science is headed, but said the study needs to be completed.

EPA has said it plans to issue a final report this year.

Read more here: <http://www.adn.com/2013/06/07/2931467/begich-didnt-support-pebble-study.html#storylink=cpy>

Ran on "Environment" page in A-Section (A16) of print edition this morning.

## Five Western senators question Obama on proposed Alaskan mine

By Juliet Eilperin, Published: June 9

Five Democratic senators are asking President Obama to consider blocking a proposed mine in Alaska's Bristol Bay, a move that could heighten pressure on the Environmental Protection Agency to veto the project.

In a letter Monday, the group of senators from Washington, Oregon and California, led by Maria Cantwell (Wash.), argue that their states could suffer economically if a huge gold-and-copper mine moves forward. The EPA is conducting a scientific review of how the project, underwritten by mining giants Northern Dynasty and Anglo American, would affect the region's aquatic life.

The group of senators — which includes Patty Murray (Wash.), Jeff Merkley (Ore.), Dianne Feinstein (Calif.) and Barbara Boxer (Calif.) — points to a recent study by the University of Alaska Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) that estimates that salmon fishing in Bristol Bay provides their states with \$500 million in direct income. In addition, the study says, Washington, Oregon and California benefit from \$674 million in economic activity from the region's salmon fishing and processing.

“Our states have a strong maritime history of which our commercial fishing industries are a key part,” the senators write. “In order to maintain these direct fishing and processing jobs, and the jobs supported by associated businesses like gear manufacturers, shipbuilders, suppliers and other maritime businesses, we must maintain healthy, sustainable fishery resources.”

In the letter, the senators ask Obama to “make staff from both the Council on Environmental Quality and the Department of Commerce available to our staff to discuss the implications of this economic report, and how these two agencies, specifically, are working with the EPA to protect our maritime economies.”

Under the Clean Water Act, the EPA can invoke the rarely used section 404(c) authority , which bars the Army Corps of Engineers from issuing a federal permit on the grounds that a project would harm the region's waterways, fish and wildlife.

The EPA issued a draft watershed assessment last year saying the mine would probably cause the loss of between 54 and 89 miles of streams and between four and seven square miles of wetlands, and any mining accident there could cause serious damage to the salmon habitat. Agency officials are accepting comments on the analysis until June 30 and have said they have not decided what action they plan to take on the proposed mine.

The coalition backing the mine argues that its economic benefits would outweigh any possible environmental damage, and Alaska senators Lisa Murkowski (R) and Mark Begich (D) have warned the EPA against issuing a “pre-emptive veto” of the project. Last month, the Pebble Mine Partnership released an economic analysis estimating that the project would generate 2,500 construction jobs during the five years that it would take to build the facility and up to \$180 million in taxes and royalties.

The EPA could not be reached for comment Sunday.